

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

What is claimed is:

1. (cancelled)

2. (currently amended)        A flat sealing ring (1) for producing a fluid-tight coupling of two surfaces which are to be sealed against one another by means of a contact force, the ring (1) having an elastically deformable base ring (2), a stiffening ring (3, 3', 3'') for limiting compression of the base ring (2), and at least one protective layer (4), wherein said base ring (2) comprises a core of elastically deformable material (6), wherein a cross-section of said core comprises a center section with first and second wing sections extending from said center section, wherein each said first and second wing section sections comprises respective first and second planar surfaces parallel to a first ring plane and extending directly from said center section, wherein ~~said second wing section comprises third and fourth planar surfaces parallel to said the respective first ring plane and extending directly from said center section, wherein the first and third planar surfaces lie on a second ring plane and the respective second and fourth planar surfaces lie on a third ring plane, different than the second ring plane, wherein the center section is at least partially disposed between the second and third planes and extends from between the second and third planes to beyond the second and third planes, wherein said center section comprises a first surface directly connected with said first and third planar surfaces and entirely disposed beyond said second plane ring, wherein said center section includes a second surface directly connected with said respective second and fourth planar surfaces and disposed entirely beyond said third plane ring, wherein the at least one protective layer (4) covers at least a portion of the base ring (2), said portion including said first and second surfaces and said first, second, third, and fourth planar surfaces, wherein said first and second planar surfaces extend radially inward from said center section and said portion connects said first and second planar~~